



Iron Man, Volume 1: Believe

Kieron Gillen (Writer), Greg Land (Illustrations)

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Tony Stark is Iron Man: Technological visionary, wealthy playboy, unparalleled engineer, and armored Avenger. But in one terrifying instant, his greatest invention becomes his greatest mistake. The lethal techno virus Extremis is out in the wild and out for grabs to the highest bidder! Introducing the Circle, a mysterious high-tech brotherhood of mech-knights, as Tony's hunt for the rogue Extremis Units takes him to the island of New Camelot! As he dogfights the secret Russian Black Exoskeleton Academy's greatest pilot, Iron Man must act fast...and Tony Stark must build faster! It's up to Tony to contain Extremis, and that means creating a new suit of armor...NOW!

Collecting: *Iron Man* 1-5

Iron Man, Volume 1: Believe Details

Date : Published April 16th 2013 by Marvel (first published November 7th 2012)

ISBN : 9780785168331

Author : Kieron Gillen (Writer) , Greg Land (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 136 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Superheroes, Marvel, Graphic Novels

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From Reader Review Iron Man, Volume 1: Believe for online ebook

Zack! Empire says

Is it just me, or does Iron Man really only work in a team setting? Seriously, I like him in the Avengers, and it's fun to read him in New Avengers, but he just doesn't have what it takes to fly solo. Tony Stark has an extreme personality, and you need people to bounce that off of, or he will just become boring. Most of this book is just Tony on his own, and you know what, it became boring.

Tony isn't the only problem with this book though. The writing is really subpar. I think the only other thing I've read by Gillen is some of his X-Men stuff, and I recall I had the same mixed feelings about his work there that I do here. I can't say that is the fault of Kieron Gillen though. His writing style might just not be to my liking. You know what I can comment on though? The seriously ridiculous and lack of clarity this book has.

So this woman wants to have a one night stand with Tony, right? How does she go about it? By acting dumber than she really is. Seriously? WTF? Dude, Tony Stark is a really simple guy when it comes to things like this. If she would just walk up to him and say, "I'm really in the mood and I want you to take me home and fuck me", he would do it. Because that is the kind of guy Tony is. Why does she need to act dumb to get his attention? It just doesn't make any sense. Tony lives his life with a serious death wish. He isn't going to be turned on by some dim witted bimbo. He's going to respond to someone who is direct and challenges him. This was just a serious case of a male ego driven scene.

Can someone please tell me who is narrating the second issue of this collection? At first I thought it was Tony, since it's his title, but that makes no sense if you read it. So then I thought it was the generic evil business guy. Nope, wrong again. So it must be this lady they call Merlin? No, cause in this scene she is clearly the one telling the story and the caption box is different. Oh, it was one of the people in the suits? Well I'm glad you told us that at the very fucking end. It's a good thing it didn't seriously mess up my enjoyment of the issue trying to figure out who the fuck was talking the whole time.

So in the third issue we see a big problem with Iron Man: his weak ass rouge's gallery. It's not just in concept either, but in actual power level. Tony's got on a suit that's only 10 percent as strong as his usual and he still takes two of the three guys out with no problem. Where is the threat there? He could have beat those guys with a can of mace and a give em hell attitude. And when Tony mentions two previous patients who died from the extremis virus, he says it like we are supposed to know what he is talking about, but I had no clue. Was that from a different issue? Or did it just get thrown in there? How about a little editor's note saying, "See issue..." or do they just expect that you will just look it up on Wikipedia?

Greg Land's art is not good. It lacks any life what so ever. The thing about drawing is that it takes place on a flat surface. The artist has to trick your eyes into believing they are looking at a three dimensional object. Greg Land can't do that. I suspect that his process is just to find a good image in Magazines or run a Google Image search to find what he wants, and then traces it onto the art board. This just makes for lifeless looking cardboard cut out faces and poses.

There are some things I did like. The first page narration is good. Tony talking about how he believes in the future was a really good and strong way to let a reader know who he was and what he's about from the very beginning. The designs for the various armors was also cool. That's actually one of the stronger points of Iron Man for me. All the different suits he can wear. And Gillen does a nice job of explaining why he has those different suits, since a tool designed to do a specific job will do it better than a generic tool designed for all around performance.

The end of the book gave me a slight hope that things might be better in a future volume, with Tony going off into space. But there is now way I will read anymore of this unless I can get it for free.

Sam Quixote says

A very disappointing start to the relaunched title of one of Marvel's biggest heroes. There's not much original about the book, Gillen's writing is so-so while Land's art all but sinks the book. Full review here!

Triinu says

Minu arvamuse leiab blogist [https://triinuraamatud.wordpress.com/...](https://triinuraamatud.wordpress.com/)

Anne says

Didn't love it, didn't hate it. Quite a bit of *meh* to my feelings.

When did the chick who engineered Extremis become a good guy? I missed something, didn't I? Somebody tell me what I missed!

Tony tracks down Extremis kits that have been sold to various villains and even to some not-so-bad guys. The King Arthur storyline was by far the lamest, and the demon-chick at the end was by far the most confusing.

In between there was a lot of that *meh* I mentioned.

Gavin says

OK, so finally my library got this in, and Vol. 2! I was excited, as I am with all Marvel NOW! Books, versus DC New 52, where I have a feeling that sits somewhere between utter dread and ambivalence.

Good stuff: I actually liked the idea of Tony having to go around to shut down the people who'd bought Black-Market Extremis, sort of paying penance for his involvement.

Some of the various Iron Man armours are on display here, I thought the liquid smart-metal armour was AWESOME! What a great idea (if Gillen actually came up with it himself, if not, then good use of it).

The Armour looks very cool, even the new Black/Gold that can look like a bumblebee in the wrong hands.

Bad Stuff: Greg Land.

Seriously, I know it's been mentioned in Sesana's Review and Sam's Review, but Land CANNOT draw Tony Stark. Or women. He can draw A single woman, but there's no way to vary other than hair colour (and he isn't the colourist, so technically he doesn't do different).

I look at "Tony Stark" and I'm just like

So there's enough to like, but not LOVE, and there's enough to dislike, but not HATE.

The book is a self-contained story though, which is good, and leads Tony to a conclusion about who he is/what he needs to do, which sets up the 2nd volume. (That I happened to read right afterwards).

Space Armour!!! Guardians of the Galaxy Space Armour!!

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C.G. Drews says

Okay, confession: I did read all of Tony's parts in RDJ's voice. I couldn't help it.

I liked it, but I definitely didn't love it. For being vol. 1 in a new series, it still was a bit hard to really get into. It wasn't until the end that I figured Extremis was a virus and not a robot. My bad. And I didn't adore the art. SORRY. It just seemed a bit off.

Also, so sexist. I get that Tony Stark IS a sexist person, but anytime a girl is in the comic, it's her body that's prominent and not, like, her face or personality. That's incredibly sucky. I get used to saying "well that's how it is according to Tony Stark" BECAUSE NO. There is never an excuse for sexualising women.

It did make me sniffle with feels when he named his new processor P.E.P.P.E.R. Aw, Tony Stark does have a heart. Though I have too many questions like, where's JARVIS? And why aren't Tony/Pepper together? Or even vaguely together? Tony has a string of blondes the whole time but there's no indication that he and Pepper ever had a thing which feels off.

Basically there's a lot of action scenes where Iron Man shoots people and then confesses he doesn't feel like the good guy. He's not even as cynical or witty as I hoped.

Consider me disappointed.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

I've not been an Iron Man fan for long, and I've by no means read his entire repertoire, but geez, this was so not worth \$20.

The Extremis virus is back and Tony must hunt down the four clusters, if you will, out there. Cue lots of "monster of the week" plot lines - a goofy Arthurian one, a somewhat more interesting one involving a drug dealer and his dying daughter, an OK if not terribly well explained one with 13 brainwashed women and the last, a plot involving enhancing humans to adjust to space.

Honestly, the whole thing just flails and dies. The writing is so heavy, so wordy, it just doesn't let the panels speak for themselves. I've found I really despise comics that insist on having the protagonist endlessly narrate - zzzz!!! The art is very blah. Not bad, but not that great either. And the stories are mostly meh - with the exception of the drug lord one. The unfortunate part is that ALL of the stories are so short and so poorly explored, I wonder, why bother?

After this, I'm not sure I want to continue this line. It seems the series is just content to pump out issues, relying on the movies to sell them. I shouldn't read a comic and be bored and confused. I may just have to start checking out this series at the library, and save myself that \$20.

Andrew says

This was the first Iron Man comic I've read since Ellis's Extremis. Oddly, it picks up the Extremis story-line. Some bad guy has stolen the technology and sold it to some people. The book is very episodic with each chapter concerning Stark retrieving the technology from another buyer. This makes for a fairly predictable story, but the author keeps it interesting by the variety of characters and the varying uses the buyers used the technology for. Some use it for evil, some for good (in an idealistic sense). I suppose that's the theme of the story: Stark questions whether his technology has a net-positive or negative impact on humanity.

The art was nice, and consistent; although nothing to get excited over.

Mely says

Read in single issues.

I expected Greg Land's art to be a problem, and it was. I didn't expect Kieron Gillen's writing to be a problem, but it was.

The best writing in the world would struggle against Land's art, with its squinty-eyed men, its complete inability to depict any convincing human expressions (especially for women, who are limited either to smiling maniacally or looking like they're faking arousal), and its objectifying poses. It is, to be fair, pretty good at the technofantasia -- Iron Man in space looks quite nice.

Gillen's writing here, however, would drag down better art (it is not possible to drag down Land's art). This entire story is going through the motions, without verve or distinction, nothing entertaining, let alone anything that feels urgent to say. Tony Stark hunts down rogue Extremis installations and has self-centered or outright creepy interactions with Pepper Potts, who seems overly concerned with Tony's personal life for someone who is now the CEO of a company unaffiliated with him and also has a boyfriend. Maya Hansen is killed off in the first issue. The third issue features a bunch of women whom Extremis has turned into Dracula's wives: albino, mindless, and demonic. The conclusion of the arc is Tony naming his new AI after Pepper to remind him of earthly ties while he travels in space. Gillen lampshades this by having Tony realize this is creepy, but frankly I do not think either of them realizes *how* creepy it is, or how much it plays into sexist associations of women with earth, home, and care-taking, and men with exploration and adventure. Meanwhile, the entire arc of Tony's concerns about technology and interest in space exploration falls flat, both because Matt Fraction's run just ended the exact same way (Tony going off on a outer space trip) and

because off in Jonathan Hickman's *Avengers*, space exploration is not only well-launched, but Tony has made a casual trip to Mars and been captured by galaxy-traveling world-destroying space aliens. Other people can't be trusted with the Extremis, but Tony has no ideas how to use it -- except to save a brown damsel in distress dying of cancer, who of course needs a white knight to swoop in with advanced technology to save her. Gillen's attempts at wide scope feels rote and his attempts at intimacy feel ham-handed.

Particularly bad bits:

* Apparently, recovering alcoholic Tony Stark keeps bottles of champagne around in his apartment.

* Tony Stark, notoriously paranoid about his tech and also engaged in a quest to recover and sequester Extremis, works on Iron Man designs at a poolside surrounded by women in bikinis, because no woman in a bikini has ever been a corporate spy. Then, because there just can't be enough of the male gaze in this scene, Greg Land frames the panels so that the Tony/Pepper conversation is dominated by the image of Pepper's ass.

* Pepper's expression as she asks, "Be honest, Tony. Do *I* look the same to you?" Gillen is obviously trying to suggest that Tony is using casual sex to avoid intimacy and that his contempt for the women he sleeps with deforms his emotional relationship with Pepper. This is undermined by the writing (in which Pepper's attitude towards Tony's one-night stands is even more misogynistic than Tony's) and then it is flat-out blown to bits by the art because ohmygod just *look* at it.

What worked:

* The new sulky adolescent AI amused me.

Jerry says

Like many of the comic book omnibuses I've been reading lately, this features amazing artwork and a great storyline...but a bit too much sultriness, blood, and profanity.

Cheese says

This is my first iron man book and I was expecting this to be massively crap, but it wasn't. I actually enjoyed it.

I always thought iron man is good on screen, but he's never worked for me in comics. This kept me entertained until the end, but I don't think I'd read vol.2 unless it was on sale.

I'm wondering if I need to check out any of his old stuff....hmmmm where to start? Anyone?

Apart from some dodgy smiles from Tony in this, it was quite entertaining.

Jen says

Every time I see this type of art (hell, I probably keep seeing the same artist and not realizing it) I knock down a star. I hate, hate, hate how the women are drawn. I feel like they're almost exactly the same in the face just with different hairstyles.

Story was ok. Little haphazard.

Jesse A says

Pretty decent. I wasn't a fan of Fraction's run with IM and this was one was more fun than that series. This book still felt super disjointed. A lot of easy villians for Tony to wipe out. Gives it a pretty slight feeling. Still willing to move forward with this series.

Nicolo Yu says

The introductory arc of Gillen's run in Iron Man is a direct sequel to Warren Ellis' seminal *Extremis* story-line. It's Tony Stark's worst nightmare, the science that made him the best Iron Man he could in the hands of the weapon merchants A.I.M.

I actually appreciated this approach by Gillen because *Extremis* is much more familiar to me than Matt Fraction's Iron Man, whose work on the character preceded Gillen's. It also helped that the Iron Man sequel released this year borrowed heavily from Ellis' story.

I enjoyed this trade. It read as good as it was in floppies but the trade has all the variant covers of the first five issues of this title.

Sesana says

Mixed feelings. On one hand, I do appreciate that the storyline is self contained. It starts here, and it's over with here. You don't need much canon background, other than a passing knowledge of *Extremis*. I already had that, but you could probably pick up everything you needed to know from this collection. And parts of the story are very fun.

That said, I did take issue with some aspects of this book, namely the art. Land seems to have a hard time drawing convincing expressions, especially on the female characters. Consistency also seems to be an issue: the Tony Stark in issue one doesn't quite look like the Tony Stark of issue three. I also got tired of the how sexualized all of the female characters are. All of them. It's really irritating when Pepper and Tony are trying to have a serious conversation, in panels framed where we see Pepper's body, but not her face. That it doesn't happen more often is solely due to the book being mostly Tony, most of the time.

The vast majority of women that show up on the page are there as props, not as people. Gillen took Tony's playboy tendencies to their crudest extremes, while ignoring Tony's actual character. Would he really work

on designs for future tech while literally surrounded by bikini-wearing women? Because there's absolutely no way that one of his competitors couldn't take advantage of that by sending in a pretty lady in very little clothing to do a little corporate espionage. And while I'm at it, Tony designing an AI to sound like Pepper (and naming it P.E.P.P.E.R.) is far, far creepier than Gillen seems to realize.

I would have enjoyed this book more if not for all of that, but it's hardly a work of genius in any event. Fun, sure, and easy for readers fresh off Iron Man 3 but with little comic content.
